

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**NBC BRIEFING**

**1 October 1957**

**FALL OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT**

- I. 279 to 253 defeat of Bourges-Maunoury sharpens Assembly divisions over key Algerian and economic issues.**
  - A. Extreme left and right voted against him for different reasons.**
    - 1. Communists want independence for Algeria.**
    - 2. Poujadists reject any concessions to Moslems.**
  - B. Firm opposition of former governor of Algeria, Soustelle, swung many wavering Independents to vote against.**
    - 1. His efforts aided by strong rightist reaction to proposals that arms be supplied to Tunisia, by France, U.S., or anyone else.**
  - C. Farmer and small business opposition to austerity program also major factor.**
    - 1. Rural pressure for hikes in frozen prices had already forced deposit of motion of censure in Assembly.**
- II. Maneuverability of premier candidates narrowed.**
  - A. Independent disavowal of Socialist-sponsored Algerian statute drives new wedge between Socialists and right.**
    - 1. Formation of a government without Communist support is impossible if one of these groups is firmly opposed.**
  - B. Rural and labor interests may bring increased pressure on deputies to find early compromise candidate—presumably one who will relieve them from farm price ceilings and wage freeze.**

DOCUMENT NO. 2  
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. **X**  
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 1990  
AUTH: HB 70-2  
DATE: 2/27/82 REVIEWER: [ ]

State Dept. review completed

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- C. New candidate will, however, have to face exigencies of dollar shortage. Some form of present economy program must be continued to apply for international loan.

III. France's position in UN and with Algerian nationalists severely weakened.

- A. May again walk out during UN General Assembly discussion of Algeria.
- B. Rebel position strengthened at expense of Algerian moderates, who have had ground cut from under them.
- C. Differences between French military and civil authorities in Algeria may be accentuated.

IV. President Coty not expected to accept resignation until candidate officially announced. Thus Govt's special powers for Algeria remain in effect. Early speculation mentions:

- A. The return of Socialist leader Guy Mollet.
- B. Gaullist Jacques Soustelle.
  - 1. Since he is chief author of overthrow, he will probably be first <sup>approached</sup> ~~approached~~ by Coty. However, US Embassy thinks he has little chance in view of Socialist opposition.
- C. Radical Socialist Education Minister Rene Billeres.
- D. Radical Socialist Defense Minister Andre Morice.
- E. Ex-premier Rene Pleven (UDSR).
- F. General De Gaulle.
  - 1. Chances of "National" candidate would increase in protracted crisis.
  - 2. More liberal view on Algeria than Soustelle, but still insistent on broader authority than assembly likely

CONFIDENCE VOTE BY  
PARTIES IN FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

1 Oct 57

<u>Party</u>	<u>No. seats held</u>	<u>No. voting for</u>	<u>No. voting against</u>
Communist & Progressive Republicans	149	0	145
Socialist	101	95	0
Radical Socialist	45	26	13
Autonomous Radical (RGR)	13	10 *	7 * — (Note: press vote (figures do not match number of (seats held.)
Dissident Radical	13	9 *	5 * —
Social Republicans	21	0	17
Popular Republicans	74	67	1
Conservatives (Independents, Peasants, Antier Peasants)	103	46	51
Poujadists	37	0	30
Others (UDSR, IOM and unaffiliated)	40	0	10
	<u>596</u>	<u>259</u>	<u>279</u>
Abstentions:	5		
Absences	58		